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## Russia's Actions in Syria Change West's Mindset (II)

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How do informed Americans react to what has taken place in Syria in recent weeks? They are at a loss as a result of Obama's Middle East policy failure and call for putting an end to confusion. One must learn to live in the multipolar, more complex world. This is a new imperative the Western mindset finds so hard to put up with. «The United States considers how to respond to Russia – and the fraying global order», emphasizes well-known US political scholar Jeffrey Gedmin in an analytical article published by influential *The American Interest*.

According to him, the time is ripe to put an end to confusion engendered by US foreign policy, «it's also urgent we regroup from the shambles that is the Obama Administration's foreign policy», he writes. The Western-led world order is crumbling today. Our failures in Iraq and Afghanistan, deep cuts to our defense budgets, a resurgent Russia, a rising China, the emergence of ISIS, and the staying power of a theocratic Iran, bent - with or without nuclear weapons - on

regional hegemony all suggest a future where peace will be constantly threatened and our interests undermined at every turn», Gedmin points out. *The Washington Times* comes out in support of this conclusion.

«Confusion reigns inside the Obama administration regarding Russia's military campaign to bolster President Bashar Assad's endangered Syrian regime», writes John Bolton, a leading US neocon and former US ambassador to the United Nations. «Russian President Vladimir Putin's intervention clearly caught President Obama flat-footed, and so far there is no sign Mr. Obama knows how to respond. His public defensiveness reinforces the impression of a man whose worldview is collapsing around him», Bolton notes.

The Obama's failure in the Middle East has led to embarrassment. The calls for ending the «confusion» have become prevalent recently to mirror the reaction of informed Americans to the recent events in Syria. There is a feeling that «the Russia's return», the emergence of the Islamic State and the rise of China prove the fact that the unipolar global pattern is going through full and complete collapse. One must adapt to the multipolar world fraught with even more challenges. The West finds it hard to adapt to the new reality.

No matter that, the realization of this fact is growing within the circles independent from Washington D.C. officialdom. Jean-Claude Juncker, President of European Commission, says that Europe must improve its relationship with Russia, and should not let this be something decided by Washington.

«We must make efforts towards a practical relationship with Russia. It is not sexy but that must be the case, we can't go on like this,» he said at an event in the southern German town of Passau. «Russia must be treated decently,» he said. «We can't let our relationship with Russia be dictated by Washington».

US political analyst and journalist Eric Best told Czech news outlet Parlamentnilisty.cz that according to US media, the United States is keeping low profile in Syria.

It is ceding its positions. The situation has changed. All of a sudden Russia has become the main actor there. It has intervened in Syria to prove that there is alternative to the unipolar world and those who are willing to do so can grasp the opportunity offered by Russia. Eric Best believes that it could influence the swing states that have not taken sides as yet.

The US officials still stick to the old ways of doing things. Marine General Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, visited Iraq to meet with Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi and Defense Minister Khaled al-Obeidi, Talking to them, he stressed that «it would make it very difficult for us to be able to provide the kind of support you need if the Russians were here conducting operations as well».

So what? Has this stern warning produced any result? On October 23, Turkish news agency Anadolu reported that the Iraqi government authorized Russia to target Daesh convoys coming from Syria. What General Dunford said in his conversation with Iraqi officials show that the General sticks to the logic of Cold War being revived by the United States? Today the world

faces a new enemy – international armies of terrorists – to make this logic useless. That's the rub. In the contemporary world this vision has become an anachronism. The days when the world was divided into spheres of interest between the West and the East are long gone. New vision of things is needed to face the geopolitical situation in the 21st century.

There is a chance that Turkey will be the first member of the Atlantic community to realize that that new approaches are needed to manage regional problems. This country is deeply entangled into the Syrian conflict to face unpredictable consequences. USAK, a Turkish media outlet, reports that Turkish politicians need to reduce tensions in the relations between Russia and Turkey arisen after the Russia's military intervention into Syria.

[http://www.usak.org.tr/kose\\_yazilari\\_det.php?id=2440&cat=326#.Vizs\\_2uDdu8](http://www.usak.org.tr/kose_yazilari_det.php?id=2440&cat=326#.Vizs_2uDdu8)

USAK believes that the point of view that NATO membership makes the position of Turkey stronger when it comes to crisis management holds no water. Quite to the contrary. The examples of Georgia, Crimea, Ukraine and the regional conflicts taking place in the vicinity of Turkey demonstrate that this approach has failed to live up to expectations. A very significant recognition!

In particular, USAK takes a dim view of attempts undertaken by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the Turkish government to make the incidents with Russian aircraft violating the Turkish air space part of Russia-NATO agenda. The outlet warns that it will fail to bring about expected results. The Russia-NATO dialogue is suspended with the contacts frozen. The tensions between Moscow and Ankara affecting the situation in the southern parts of Turkey would give rise to new challenges to the country's national security, USAL notes. A very reasonable and timely thought for consideration!